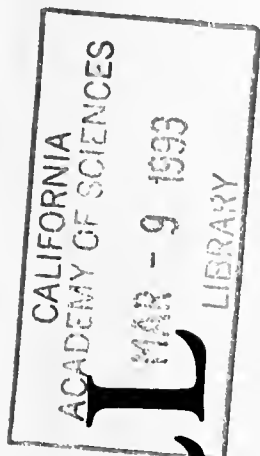


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THE GULL

Golden Gate Audubon Society Berkeley, California Volume 75 Number 3 March 1993



MARINE MAMMALS: NATURAL HISTORY AND CURRENT ISSUES

Leslie Grella, Director of Education for the Marine Mammal Center, will present our March program in San Francisco. Her slide/talk will begin at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 11th at the Josephine Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, in San Francisco. Ms. Grella will share interesting natural history observations about California Sea Lions, Harbor Seals, Northern Elephant Seals, dolphins and whales that inhabit our coastal waters, and also discuss the latest environmental issues concerning the management and conservation of these marine mammals.

We will also learn where the best places are to view marine mammals, and what times are best for viewing them. Current research projects being undertaken by the Marine Mammal Center will also be discussed, as well as the current population status of local marine mammals. For example, did you know that the populations of California Sea Lions are up, while Steller's

(continued on p. 38)

A TRIP ON THE BAY ON AUDUBON'S BIRTHDAY

On Monday, April 26, John James Audubon's birthday, the Dolphin Charters Company's *Delphinus* will take a party of thirty Golden Gate Audubon members on a sunset cruise on the Bay. Will you join us?

Aboard the *Delphinus* we will cruise from 7 p.m. to 10 along our Christmas Count route into the Oakland Estuary. We expect to see lots of birds. Food and drink will be provided for a festive occasion. All the proceeds of this event will go to support GGAS conservation, education and field trip activities. The cost of the trip will be \$49 per person, which includes food and drink. If you are interested in coming on this delightful trip, send a check made payable to GGAS to the office at 2530 San Pablo Ave., Suite G, Berkeley CA 94702. If you'd like more information, call us at (510) 843-2222 Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

CHRISTMAS COUNT REPORTS IN THIS ISSUE

San Francisco — Oakland — Yosemite

MEETING (continued from pg. 37)

Sea Lion populations are declining? Current issues, such as the increased shooting of marine mammals and entanglement will be another focus of the program.

Ms. Grella will also talk about the work of the Marine Mammal Center, which is located in the Marin Headlands in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The Center is a private, nonprofit organization licensed by the federal government to rescue and rehabilitate marine mammals stranded along the California coast. Since 1975, their veterinary and trained volunteer staff have treated hundreds of marine mammals and released them back into the ocean. It is the only organization serving the fifteen coastal counties from the Oregon border through San Luis Obispo County.

Remember, there is plenty of free parking, along with free cookies and beverages. How can You pass up such a deal? Check *The GULL* for January (page 16) for a map.

—JOELLA BUFFA

WELCOME

The Board announces with pleasure the appointment of two new officers: Carol Opatow of San Francisco, who has agreed to serve as Corresponding Secretary, and Frances Harmon as Treasurer, replaces Nicola Selph. The Board expresses thanks to Nicola for her long service in a demanding job, and for her willingness to continue to as a member of the Finance Committee.

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Wednesday, March 10—Mini-trip to Mitchell Canyon. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510/351-9301) and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

For details on the above, see *The GULL* for February.

Saturday, March 13—Richardson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. Meet at 10 a.m. at the Audubon Center in the Wildlife Sanctuary, 376 Greenwood Rd. in Tiburon. From Hwy. 101 take the Belvedere/Tiburon exit; go east and turn right at the third traffic light, Greenwood Cove Rd., then an immediate left.

There should be several thousand birds on the water, and a variety of shorebirds. We may be able to see courting Western Grebes. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. From 10 a.m. until noon we will have a shoreline walk, and a slide show on waterfowl. From 1 p.m. until 2:30 we will look for birds along the trail, then end the day with a brief tour of the Lyford House. Leader: Merle Sundove (415/388-2524) (✓)

Sunday, March 14—Tennessee Cove. Meet at 9 a.m. This will be a two-mile walk to Tennessee Cove, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, to look for land birds (including White-throated Swifts) and shorebirds. From San Francisco take Hwy. 101 north to Marin Co. and exit on Hwy. 1 toward Mill Valley and Stinson Beach. In about one quarter mile turn left onto Tennessee Valley Rd. Meet at the end of the road. Bring

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$10 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$20 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 15, 1917,
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.

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lunch. Leader: Betty Short (415/921-3020, work) (✓)

Saturday, March 20—San Francisco Bird Blitz. In past years participants have reported over 100 species within the City limits. This year's mad dash, hoping to exceed all previous records, will begin at 7 a.m. sharp.

Meet at the north end of Van Ness Ave. (past North Point—the last cross street) at the foot of Municipal Pier. From there we will caravan to other sites including Golden Gate Park, Sutro Baths, Lake Merced and Candlestick Point. Bring lunch and liquids. We will bird until dusk, then adjourn to a nearby restaurant where, for a minimal cost, we can avoid going home to cook dinner. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415/664-0983). (✓)

Saturday, March 20—Sunol Regional Park. Meet at 8:30 a.m. inside the park entrance at the parking lot on the left. Take I-680 south, turn off at Calaveras Rd. (the freeway sign is marked: Calaveras Rd., Dumbarton Bridge, Calif. 84). Go south (left) and follow the signs to Sunol Regional Park, about five miles. Bring lunch and liquids. (Park regulations prohibit alcoholic beverages.) We should see Golden Eagles, a variety of winter residents and early spring migrants. This trip is also good for wildflowers. Leader: Gene Hull (510/525-6893) \$ (✓)

Saturday/Sunday, March 20-21—Honey Lake. Call for detailed directions. Trip will be limited to 20 participants. Lodging is available in Susanville; primitive camping is also available. Be sure to bring warm clothing, lunches for both days, and a scope if you have one. We should see Sage Grouse, Bald Eagles, and other



birds of the eastern Sierra. Leader: Bob Hirt (408/446-4478) (✓)

Sunday, March 21—Monterey Bay pelagic trip. See *The GULL* for February for details.

Sunday, March 21—Sutter Buttes (by reservation only). This is a first for GGAS. Interest in a field trip in this area was sparked by the enthusiastic reception of biologist Don Schmoldt, who shared his knowledge of birdlife in the Sutter Buttes area at the January meeting.

Meet at 9 a.m. in the town of Sutter. (AAA map of Sacramento Valley is helpful.) Allow two to two and one-half hours driving time from the Bay Area. Drive north on I-5 to Williams, then east on Hwy. 20. Continue through Colusa (toward Yuba City) for about 16 miles. Watch for a sign to Sutter. Turn left (Acacia Ave.) and drive one mile north. Meet by the church at the first intersection. From there we will carpool/caravan. We will be looking for Ferruginous Hawks, Golden Eagles (nesting), Prairie Falcons, also Canyon Wrens, Phainopepla, Rufus-crowned Sparrows and early migrants.

An entrance fee of \$25 per person is required. For reservations checks payable to GGAS must be received in the GGAS office by March 8th.

Bring lunch and liquids, layer clothes, and footwear for moderate hiking (possibly wet conditions). Trip will end around 3 p.m. Leader: Middle Mountain Foundation staff member. (✓)

CALIFORNIA
ENDANGERED
SPECIES
CAMPAIGN



Saturday, March 27—Gardening for the environment. A tour of Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the corner of 10th Ave. and Lincoln Way. Join Don Mahoney from the Arboretum, Alan Hopkins from GGAS and Barbara Deutsch as we discuss ways to increase the natural habitat value of your yard. We will note the plants and trees that attract wildlife, and observe the birds, butterflies, and beneficial bugs that use them. A resource sheet will be provided for interested gardeners. Co-leader: Alan Hopkins (415/664-0983)

Saturday, March 27—Bodega Bay. Meet at 9 a.m. at the intersection of Hwy. 1 and East Shore Rd. (one-half mile north of Diekmann's Bay Store). We will bird for spring migrants in Bodega Harbor and Bodega Head, observing waterfowl and shorebirds in their spring plumage. Bring a bag lunch and liquids.

If you arrive Friday, lodging is available at the Best Western Motel (707/875-3525) and the Bodega Court Inn (707/875-2217). There are nice campsites at the Dune's State Park (\$) just north of our meeting place, but plan to get there early to be sure of getting a spot, or call Ticketron to reserve one. Leader: Nancy Conzett (707/875-2231) Bodega Bay. (✓)

Sunday, March 28—Hayward Regional Shoreline. Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot beyond the gate at the end of Winton Ave. Take the Winton Ave. exit off I-880 in Hayward and drive west to the end of the road.

We should see a variety of waterfowl and shorebirds, and perhaps migrating swallows. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Leader: Rusty Scalf (510/523-7108) (✓)

Saturday, April 10—Beginner's trip to Bothe-Napa Valley State Park. Meet

at 9 a.m. in the parking lot. This is a particularly beautiful park in the spring, with migrating warblers and vireos, Winter Wrens and, if we're lucky—Pileated Woodpeckers. We will walk about four to five miles and bird mostly by ear. This trip is especially good for beginners.

From the East Bay drive north on I-80 beyond Vallejo and take the Napa exit. Follow Hwy. 29 to St. Helena. The entrance to the park is on the left just past the Ole Bale Mill north of St. Helena. From the West Bay take Hwy. 101 north to Hwy. 37 near Novato; go east to the junction with Hwy. 121; turn left and continue on 121 until it joins Hwy. 29 near Napa, then continue north on 29 to the Park.

Bring lunch and liquids. Rain cancels trip. Please carpool if possible. Leader: Gene Hull (510/525-6893). \$ (✓)

Wednesday, April 14—Mini-trip to Sunol Regional Park. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Ranger Station parking lot inside the park. Take Hwy. 680 south to about eight miles beyond the intersection of Hwy. 580. Turn off at Calaveras Rd.; go left and follow the signs to Sunol Regional Park. We may see Lark Sparrows, Golden Eagles, and Northern Orioles plus resident birds of the area. Bring lunch. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510/351-9301) and Jean-Marie Spoelman. \$ (✓)

Trips marked with \$ go to parks and other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓). See below.

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chmn. (510/524-2399).

Trips Committee Chmn. (510/524-2399).

Plan Ahead:

Saturday, April 17—Briones Regional Park (one half day trip). Leader: David George.

Saturday, April 17—Fifth Annual Point Reyes Spring Birding Blitz. (Joint Activity: GGAS & Nat. Park Service) Leader: Leon Abrams.

Saturday, May 8—Bouverie Audubon Preserve (near Glen Ellen). Leader: Docents. (Limited participation—by reservation only.)

For information on the above trips, see the next issue of *The GULL*.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

OBSERVATIONS: JANUARY, 1993

We're closing in on the third anniversary of my spewing forth the observations every month and it occurs to me that I seem to have my lines down pat—it's the beginning of February and "spring is fast upon us" heralded, of course, by the sighting of the first Allen's Hummingbird which appears like clockwork somewhere nearby on January 26th, give or take a day, followed (or preceded) by Tree and Barn Swallows, although the swallows seem to be in short supply this year. The Anna's Humminbirds are already feeding young and the Great Horned Owls are calling during the day, a sure sign that nesting is imminent or afoot. I may be repeating myself on an annual basis, but it is a constant reminder of the cyclical nature of the natural year.

Reports of seabirds were minimal, but this is not the season where people confidently venture forth to sea except to look for whales and their hangers-on; and the rainy, stormy weather put a crimp on scoping from shore, but I have yet to hear a complaint about rain and wind. Seven years of drought works a

miraculous change on our priorities. Two Black-legged Kittiwakes were reported from Half Moon Bay (RSTh) and another one, an immature sleeping on the sand with a group of gulls, was just north of Bodega Bay on the 24th (LLu). Another forty-five were seen from a Monterey Bay boat on the 16th (LLu). A good day on the ocean's edge could net a careful watcher both Marbled and Ancient Murrelet; in fact, on the 24th three Ancient Murrelets put on quite a show at the Fish Docks at Point Reyes as they vied with the Common Loons and gulls for small schooling fish that suddenly appeared just off shore (EH). One doesn't often see alcids at one's feet unless the feet are rocking in rhythm with the swells. A Rhinoceros Auklet was off Half Moon Bay on the 19th (RSTh).

A **Yellow-billed Loon**, possibly (probably) the same one seen before Christmas, showed up at Hayward Shoreline on the 24th (RJR). There continues to be good numbers of Cattle Egrets reported. The Barnacle Goose mentioned last month turns out not only to be of dubious origin but also of dubious parentage: veritable wildfowl miscegenation, the likely perpetrators a Canada Goose and a Barnacle Goose. The Eurasian race of Green-winged Teal was reported from San Carlos (RSTh, PJM, JBH), Arcata (fide Arcata RBA) and Los Banos (RJR). A Marin Audubon field trip at the Las Gallinas Sewer Ponds on the 16th found an immature male **Garganey** (KB), an Asiatic teal that has been showing up regularly but infrequently over the last couple of years. The pair of Tufted Ducks continued to be seen in San Francisco (mob) while a female appeared at Lake Merritt in Oakland on the 10th (DGY, mob); and observers continued to report the female King Eider at Humboldt Bay (DGY, JM).

As many as eighteen Black Rails emerged at the high tides on January 8 and 9 at a Marin County marsh (fide JEW) while three were seen at Palo Alto Baylands at the same time (DaSa, JSC, RFr). Up to seventeen Lesser Golden-Plovers remained at the Spaletta Plateau (mob); eight Red Knots at Limantour were an oddity on the outer coast (JD); and Ruffs at Lemoore in Fresno County (SBT) and Merced NWR (DGr) round out the shorebird round-up.

Every day for the last twelve years, a kindly soul from Ukiah has fed the waterbirds at Lake Mendocino; about two months ago a strange gull started showing up for the feeding: small, with long wings, a long, thin black bill, reddish legs and a smudgy hooded appearance, it was just an odd bird until January 23 when it was identified as an immature **Laughing Gull** (JRW, CY, RS). On the 31st there were also four Mew Gulls partaking of the largesse, birds rarely seen away from coastal waters (RS). The first **Common Black-headed Gull** to be seen in Northern California in a number of years was found at Arcata on the 24th and was still lingering on the 30th (fide Arcata RBA, JM). There has been a smattering of Glaucous Gulls around Tomales Bay to Sunnyvale.

The female Costa's Hummingbird continued to be seen in Hayward (DeH, RJR, JSL, JM). This seems to be the year of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker—Pt. Reyes Station, Rossmoor, San Mateo, Monte Rio (mob). Mines Road (JaR, mob) and Davis (JMHu, JK) each had an Eastern Phoebe toward the end of the month. A pair of Vermilion Flycatchers, first reported from Sutter County on the 29th (MP, GFi), has apparently been present for at least the last two months. One Dusky-capped Flycatcher remained in Monterey (DR); an

Ash-throated Flycatcher was in Davis on the 29th (JMHu); Townsend's Solitaires in Palo Alto and San Carlos (SRo, RSTh); and a Gray Catbird in Humboldt County (GjH, fide RAE, fide Arcata RBA). The Sage Thrasher continued in Alameda (mob) and Northern Shrikes were seen at Panochoe Valley (CKf, TAC SGI) and Merced NWR (RJR).

On the 2nd, a **Blue-winged Warbler** was found near Ferndale in Humboldt County; seeing it required major wading while the rains persisted, but as things dried out toward the end of the month, mude became the major obstacle and through it all the bird remained (DGY, JM). This species, a denizen of forest edges, is extremely rare in Northern California, but as fragmentation of eastern forests continues, the number of Blue-winged Warblers is increasing, generally at the expense of Golden-winged Warblers, so perhaps we will start to see more of these birds in California. Palm Warblers practically abounded, and the American Redstart and Ovenbird remained in San Francisco along with two Summer Tanagers (mob).

And there were sparrows: American Tree at Fernadale (StR); Clay-colored at Half Moon Bay (mob); Vesper at Panoche Valley (CKf); Sharp-tailed at Palo Alto (NiL, AME, DaSa); and Lark Bunting in Gustine (RJR). And an adult male Hooded Oriole was in Los Altos on the 15th.

Once again I have put my foot in my mouth, and I am grateful that I am corrected so gently. Let it be known that I am now aware that birds *irrupt* and volcanoes *erupt* (the difference between an incursion into and an explosion out of).

Time to spring into spring.

OBSERVERS: R. Ackley, Arcata Rare Bird Alert, Ken Burton, Theodore

A. Chandik, J. Scott Cox, Ann Dewart, Jack Dineen, Jimm Edgar, Alan M. Eisner, Richard A. Erickson, George Finger, Reid Freeman, Steve Glover, Dan Gray, Denise Hamilton, Jane Becker Haven, Gjon Hazard, Elina Holst, Joan M. Humphrey, Dave Jenson, Clay Kempf, Michael Larkin, Nick Lethaby, Leslie Lieurance, John S. Luther, Peter J. Metropulos, Joe Morlan, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Michael Perrone, Linda Petruulia, Robert J. Richmond, Don Roberson, Steve Rotterborn, Steve Rovell (StR), Daan Sandee, Dan Singer, Jean-Marie Spoelman, Rich Stallcup, Scott B. Terrill, Ronald S. Thorn, Janet E. Wessel, David G. Yee, Cindy Young. Data thanks to Joe Morlan and the Northern California Rare Bird Alert.

—ANN DEWART



HELP CENSUS OWLS

Between May 15 and July 15 a census of Burrowing Owls will be in progress, and you are invited to help. Mark Homrighausen, (510) 528-9339, is the coordinator for GGAS for this effort. Please call him if you can help or if you need more information to consider helping. The Institute for Bird Populations and 34 Audubon chapters and bird clubs are participating.

BANDED SNOWY PLOVERS

Please report any banded Snowy Plovers to Frances Bidstrup, Box 125, MacArthur, CA 96056. She is particularly interested in sightings from Abbott's lagoon, where some have been seen recently.

STATE-WIDE AUDUBON MEETING

Plans are well underway for the Audubon Meeting to be held the weekend of March 20 at the Radisson Hotel in Folsom. Folsom is about 20 miles east of Sacramento. The weekend promises to be rich in information, strategy sessions, and opportunities for interchange as Auduboners from all over the state convene. Planned are a plenary session of distinguished speakers exploring the science and politics of biodiversity protection, workshops on topics like neotropical bird conservation, wetlands protection, endangered species, Mono Lake, and more.

A lobbying day is planned for Monday at the State Capitol to give you a chance to meet your elected officials. Call the office for costs and other information at (510) 843-2222.

MARCH 13 AT THE WETLANDS!

Volunteers working with Restoring the Bay had been removing debris and invasive exotic vegetation from a salt marsh at San Leandro Bay Shoreline, recently re-named after Martin Luther King. Saturday, March 13, more help is needed from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Meet at the Oakland Sports Complex parking lot off Oakport Street (look for the peppermint gate) a quarter of a mile north of the 66th Ave. exit from I-880. Bring sun and/or rain protection, a lunch, hot or cold drinks, work gloves and tough-soled shoes. Be prepared to see lots of bird life. And be on time, there is a short walk to the actual work site, and besides, there may not be any donuts left if you are late. For more information call Save the Bay at (510) 452-9261.

THE CHRISTMAS COUNTS REPORT — 1992

OAKLAND—DEC. 20, 1992

While participants in other counts had to brave the elements, Oakland was once again blessed with dry weather. Counters included 146 observers in the field and 13 feeder watchers. We counted an average number of species, 171 (in the last 19 years, the number has ranged from 164 to 180), and a spectacular number of individuals: 154,015. For our count, this is the highest number of individual birds reported since 1976. The species most responsible for our inflated numbers was the Surf Scoter, observed in huge rafts near Alameda. We also reported record high numbers of Green-winged Teal, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Turkey Vulture, and both Red-breasted and Pygmy Nuthatch. On the down side, once again there were no Green-backed Heron, and record low numbers of Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Red-breasted Merganser, American Coot, Killdeer, American Pipit, Wren-tit, and Western Meadowlark. Burrowing Owl was seen only during the count week. Uncommon birds for this count included a Pacific Loon, Black Oystercatcher, Wandering Tattler, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Black-andwhite Warbler. This year we added a new bird to our count species list: the Sage Thrasher, which was found on Bay Farm Island by Christmas counters and subsequently seen by many observers. Responding to increased concern about feral cats, our counters also reported 113 cats outside of enclosed buildings. Unasked, one group also counted dogs, and reported 150, of which only 3 were on a leash.

—KAY LOUGHMAN

—JANET WESSEL

Compilers

SAN FRANCISCO—DEC. 29, 1992

The San Francisco Christmas Bird Count went surprisingly well except for the weather. Squalls blasted the north peninsula all day, but breaks in the weather, which sometimes lasted for a couple of hours, enabled birders to tally 55,487 birds of 167 species. We tackled on an additional 7 species during the count period.

Among the highlights were Black-vented Shearwater, Tufted Duck, Black-legged Kittiwake, Tennessee Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Hermit Warbler, Palm Warbler, Ovenbird, Wilson's Warbler, Summer Tanager, Swamp Sparrow and Northern Oriole. Peregrine Falcon, Robin, Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow-rumped Warblers were among the species with good numbers. Although our California Quail count was about average, the 28 seen in the eastern part of Golden Gate Park were the only ones in the City and may represent the last of this species in S.F.

We counted 50 cats and 28 cat feeding stations were found. It is certain many more cats had found refuge from the weather. Virtually all cats were in the City's western parks, and no doubt they are the cause of the decline of the California Quail population. Interestingly enough only a single cat was found in the two parks where dogs run free, Fort Funston and Sigmund Stern Grove. It is no surprise, however that no quail were seen in either area.

—DAN MURPHY

—ALAN HOPKINS

Compilers

SPECIES	OAKLAND	S.F.	SPECIES	OAKLAND	S.F.
Red-throated Loon	36	29	Accipiter, species	5	0
Pacific Loon	1	3	Red-shouldered Hawk	7	16
Common Loon	62	10	Red-tailed Hawk	126	62
loon, species	1	25	Golden Eagle	6	0
Pied-billed Grebe	153	56	Adult 5		
Horned Grebe	206	30	immature 1		
Eared Grebe	53	15	American Kestrel	63	40
Western Grebe	1,207	1,326	Merlin	6	2
Clark's Grebe	59	94	Peregrine Falcon	4	8
<i>Aechmophorus</i> , species	177	211	Ring-necked Pheasant	1	0
Black-vented Shearwater	0	3	California Quail	194	69
American White Pelican	1	0	Clapper Rail	17	0
Brown Pelican	142	265	Virginia Rail	2	4
Double-crested Cormorant	1,416	403	Sora	3	6
Brandt's Cormorant	47	63	American Coot	2,061	934
Pelagic Cormorant	5	13	Black-bellied Plover	1,856	441
cormorant, species	0	244	Snowy Plover	0	18
American Bittern	0	1	Semipalmated Plover	65	39
Great Blue Heron	60	31	Killdeer	103	166
Great Egret	63	18	Black Oystercatcher	1	12
Snowy Egret	105	18	Black-necked Stilt	90	7
Cattle Egret	2	4	American Avocet	2,684	166
Black-crowned Night-Heron	91	36	Greater Yellowlegs	34	0
Greater White-fronted Goose	4	1	Willet	1,371	80
Brant	0	18	Wandering Tattler	2	1
Canada Goose	1,517	20	Spotted Sandpiper	18	7
Canada Goose (small forms)	1	0	Whimbrel	18	5
Wood Duck	2	0	Long-billed Curlew	110	13
Green-winged Teal (Eur.)	2	0	Marbled Godwit	815	52
Green-winged Teal (Amer.)	288	5	Ruddy Turnstone	5	6
Mallard	792	1,111	Black Turnstone	38	57
Northern Pintail	163	4	Surfbird	0	53
Blue-winged Teal	4	0	Red Knot	16	0
Cinnamon Teal	39	3	Sanderling	925	1,420
Northern Shoveler	146	13	Western Sandpiper	10,121	1,681
Gadwall	258	9	Least Sandpiper	828	185
Eurasian Wigeon	4	0	Dunlin	9,074	397
American Wigeon	992	335	peep, species	6,120	261
Canvasback	558	84	sandpiper, species	1,200	0
Redhead	64	0	Short-billed Dowitcher	44	0
Ring-necked Duck	168	65	Long-billed Dowitchers	21	0
Tufted Duck	0	2	dowitcher, species	3,427	72
Greater Scaup	8,514	667	Common Snipe	43	57
Lesser Scaup	3,706	115	Red Phalarope	0	16
scaup, species	7,252	4,506	Bonaparte's Gull	21	16
Black Scoter	0	7	Heermann's Gull	4	205
Surf Scoter	30,157	1,349	Mew Gull	1,367	2,985
White-winged Scoter	56	17	Ring-billed Gull	2,742	2,039
scoter, species	0	555	California Gull	844	1,323
Common Goldeneye	816	82	Herring Gull	63	48
Barrow's Goldeneye	61	0	Thayer's Gull	1	11
goldeneye, species	0	2	Western Gull	2,967	5,022
Bufflehead	4,279	336	W. x Glaucous-winged Gull	24	10
Hooded merganser	5	0	Glaucous-winged Gull	426	935
Common Merganser	61	0	gull, species	3,094	2,180
Red-breasted Merganser	40	12	Black-legged Kittiwake	0	3
Ruddy Duck	4,706	453	Forster's Tern	117	11
Turkey Vulture	205	1	Common Murre	0	7
Osprey	6	0	Marbled Murrelet	0	5
Black-shouldered Kite	4	0	Rock Dove	1,623	3,274
Northern Harrier	17	1	Band-tailed Pigeon	199	530
Sharp-shinned Hawk	28	8	Mourning Dove	1,088	575
Cooper's Hawk	17	4	Barn Owl	3	2

SPECIES	OAKLAND	S.F.	SPECIES	OAKLAND	S.F.
Western Screech Owl	9	0	tanager, species	0	1
Great Horned Owl	56	1	Rufous-sided Towhee	214	33
Burrowing Owl	0	1	California Towhee	666	212
Northern Saw-whet Owl	10	0	Rufous-crowned Sparrow	13	0
White-throated Swift	30	0	Savannah Sparrow (undes.)	70	15
Anna's Hummingbird	452	277	Fox Sparrow	145	391
Belted Kingfisher	23	8	Song Sparrow	216	193
Acorn Woodpecker	27	0	Lincoln's Sparrow	16	13
Red-breasted Sapsucker	18	4	Swamp Sparrow	0	2
Nuttall's Woodpecker	63	1	White-throated Sparrow	6	5
Downy Woodpecker	28	31	Golden-crowned Sparrow	1,337	845
Hairy Woodpecker	9	2	White-crowned Sparrow	1,573	1,276
Northern (Yel.-sh.) Flicker	1	3	sparrow, species	0	20
N. (Yel.xRed-sh.) Flicker	0	2	Dark-eyed (Slate) Junco	1	0
Northern (Red-sh.) Flicker	389	159	Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco	1,911	710
Black Phoebe	77	79	Red-winged Blackbird	726	156
Say's Phoebe	5	0	Tri-colored Blackbird	48	103
Steller's Jay	449	8	Western Meadowlark	197	163
Scrub Jay	710	125	Brewer's Blackbird	856	2,137
American Crow	125	49	Brown-headed Cowbird	56	187
Common Raven	43	102	blackbird, species	104	65
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	835	264	N. (Bullock's) Oriole	0	1
Plain Titmouse	77	0	Purple Finch	43	16
Bushtit	1,347	478	House Finch	1,125	933
Red-breasted Nuthatch	326	25	Red Crossbill	15	2
White-breasted Nuthatch	25	1	Pine Siskin	68	299
Pygmy Nuthatch	66	230	Lesser Goldfinch	479	8
Brown Creeper	78	38	American Goldfinch	180	4
Rock Wren	7	0	House Sparrow	296	284
Bewick's Wren	98	12	Total Species	171	167
Winter Wren	30	34	Total Individuals	154,015	55,487
Marsh Wren	6	24	Observers in field	146	63
Golden-crowned Kinglet	56	25	Observers at feeders	13	13
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	688	235			
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1	0	Additional species seen in count circle in count week but not on count day:		
Western Bluebird	135	0	OAKLAND:		
Hermit Thrush	160	210	Burrowing Owl		
American Robin	3,654	2,234	SAN FRANCISCO:		
Varied Thrush	187	41	Green-backed Heron	Long-billed Dowitcher	
Wrentit	191	54	Osprey	Common Tern	
Northern Mockingbird	60	30	Red Knot	Western Screech Owl	
Sage Thrasher	1	0	Short-billed Dowitcher	American Redstart	
California Thrasher	43	7	YOSEMITE CHRISTMAS		
American Pipit	14	138	COUNT—1992		
Cedar Waxwing	857	120	Last year <i>The GULL</i> began what we		
Loggerhead Shrike	11	3	hope will be a tradition in announcing		
European Starling	4,530	1,536	plans for the Christmas Bird Count at		
Hutton's Vireo	17	22	Yosemite National Park, and publishing		
Tennessee Warbler	0	1	the 1991 count data. Len McKenzie,		
Orange-crowned Warbler	3	25	Chief Interpretive Ranger at the Park		
Nashville Warbler	0	5	was compiler. This year he was called		
Yellow Warbler	0	2	upon to serve as acting superintendent		
Yellow-rumped (Myr.) Warbler	9	162	at another park; his place as compiler		
Yellow-rumped (Aud.) Warbler	728	321	was filled by Kristine Fister, a Ranger		
Yellow-rumped Warbler?	963	1,905	in the Interpretive Service. Perhaps		
Townsend's Warbler	48	117			
Hermit Warbler	0	1			
Palm Warbler	0	1			
Ovenbird	0	1			
Black-and-white Warbler	1	0			
Common Yellowthroat	8	20			
Wilson's Warbler	0	1			
Summer Tanager	0	1			

it fell on the same weekend as the Oakland Count, GGAS was not represented among the participants this year. Kristine has announced that the Yosemite Count for 1993 will be Sunday, Dec. 19. Plan ahead. As Len McKenzie said, "there won't be as many species, but you can't beat the setting."

Kristine reports: "There were 17 observers in the field, in four parties, with party total of 30.5 foot miles and 35 hours. We saw 56 species and 1,307 individual birds. Still water was partly frozen and it was partly cloudy. Temperatures ranged from 25 to 45° F." Data for both years are shown for comparison.

SPECIES	1991 Dec. 15	1992 Dec. 20
Great Blue Heron (blue form)	3	0
Mallard	7	0
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	0
Cooper's Hawk	0	1
Red-tailed Hawk	7	7
Golden Eagle, adults	2	0
American Kestrel	1	2
California Quail	0	12
Mountain Quail	0	15
Band-tailed Pigeon	16	75
Great Horned Owl	2	2
Spotted Owl	1	0
Anna's Hummingbird	1	4
Belted Kingfisher	2	1
Acorn Woodpecker	113	89
Red-breasted Sapsucker	4	2
Williamson's Sapsucker	2	1
Nuttall's Woodpecker	5	4
Downy Woodpecker	9	13
Hairy Woodpecker	7	20
White-headed Woodpecker	19	7
Black-backed Woodpecker	5	1
Northern (Red-sh.) Flicker	25	18
Pileated Woodpecker	2	5
Black Phoebe	2	2
Steller's Jay	325	184
Scrub Jay	19	30
Clark's Nutcracker	0	1
Common Raven	18	13
Mountain Chickadee	56	21
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	0	25
Plain Titmouse	13	8
Bushtit	21	12
Red-breasted Nuthatch	44	7
White-Breasted Nuthatch	6	4
Brown Creeper	15	19
Rock Wren	2	3
Canyon Wren	1	4
Bewick's Wren	2	2

SPECIES	Dec. 15	Dec. 20
American Dipper	4	10
Golden-crowned Kinglet	122	181
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	26	50
Western Bluebird	11	44
Hermit Thrush	0	2
Townsend's Solitaire	4	0
American Robin	95	25
Varied Thrush	17	4
Wrentit	0	5
California Thrasher	0	1
Northern Mockingbird	1	0
Cedar Waxwing	2	32
European Starling	5	17
Yellow-rumped (Aud.) Warbler	0	17
Rufous-sided (Spot.) Towhee	15	7
California Towhee	9	25
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	0	5
Savannah Sparrow (undes)	0	1
Fox Sparrow	0	2
Golden-crowned Sparrow	26	20
Dark-eyed (Slate) Junco	20	0
Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco	63	105
Red-winged Blackbird	20	0
Brewer's Blackbird	1	0
Pine Grosbeak	3	0
Purple Finch	0	6
Cassin's Finch	15	0
Pine Siskin	7	125
Lesser Goldfinch	8	5
Evening Grosbeak	18	0
Total individuals	1,251	1,307
Total species	56	56
Field Observers	18	17

Additional species seen in count circle count week but not on count day:

1991—None 1992—Western Screech Owl
Northern Pygmy Owl
—KRISTINE FISTER
Interpretive Ranger, U.S. Park Service, Compiler

CONSERVATION NOTES
THE MONSTER TOLL ROAD
Road building continues to loom large as an environmental issue in the Bay Area. Using private capital to develop highways adds a sinister and counter-productive influence on the planning of sustainable land use and undercuts the hope of mass transit solutions to regional problems. Alameda County's Planning Dept. decision has been recognized as an indication that perhaps the Toll Road can be stopped in its tracks. At this writing it is hoped

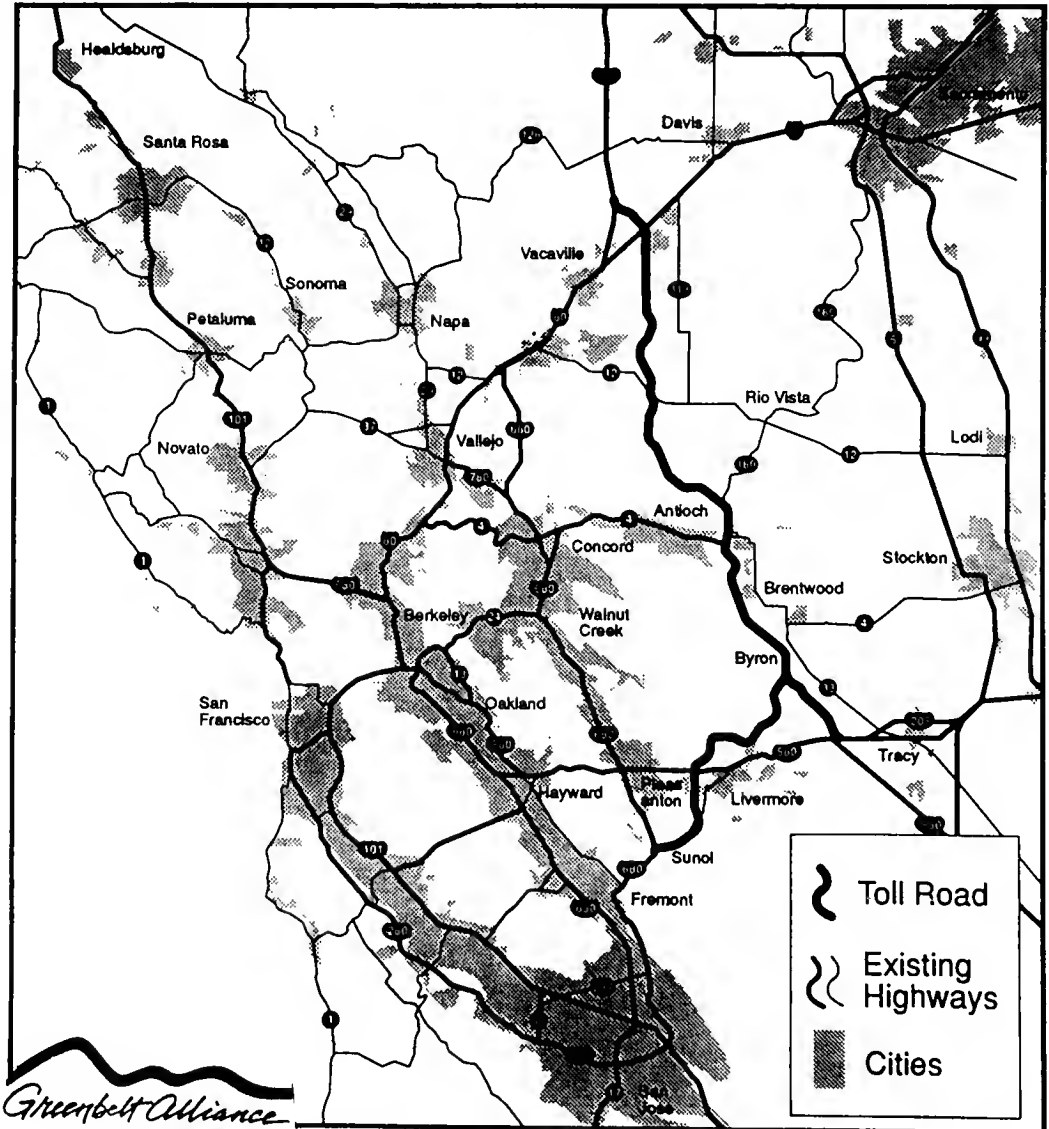
that the Board of Supervisors will endorse its planners action. Letters of thanks should be addressed Adolph Martinelli, Planning Director, 399 Elmhurst, Hayward, CA 94544.

• WHAT TO DO

It does not matter where you live in the Bay Area, the horrible Mid-State Toll Road, if constructed, will foul your air, worsen your water quality, diminish transit opportunities and harm your quality of life. It will interpose rampant development along the corridor that will impact on wetland, agriculture, and open space. So please write a let-

ter or raise your voice to the jurisdictions listed. They need to know from people all over the Bay Area that the Mid-State Toll Road will ruin our environment and our cities.

Urge the Alameda Co. Board of Supervisors to place a conservation easement around new alignment of the Isabel Expressway to keep the road two lanes. This connection from Livermore to I-680 above Fremont is the most profitable segment for the Toll Road developers. If kept to two lanes it will be very difficult to turn it into a super tollway. Write: Alameda County Board



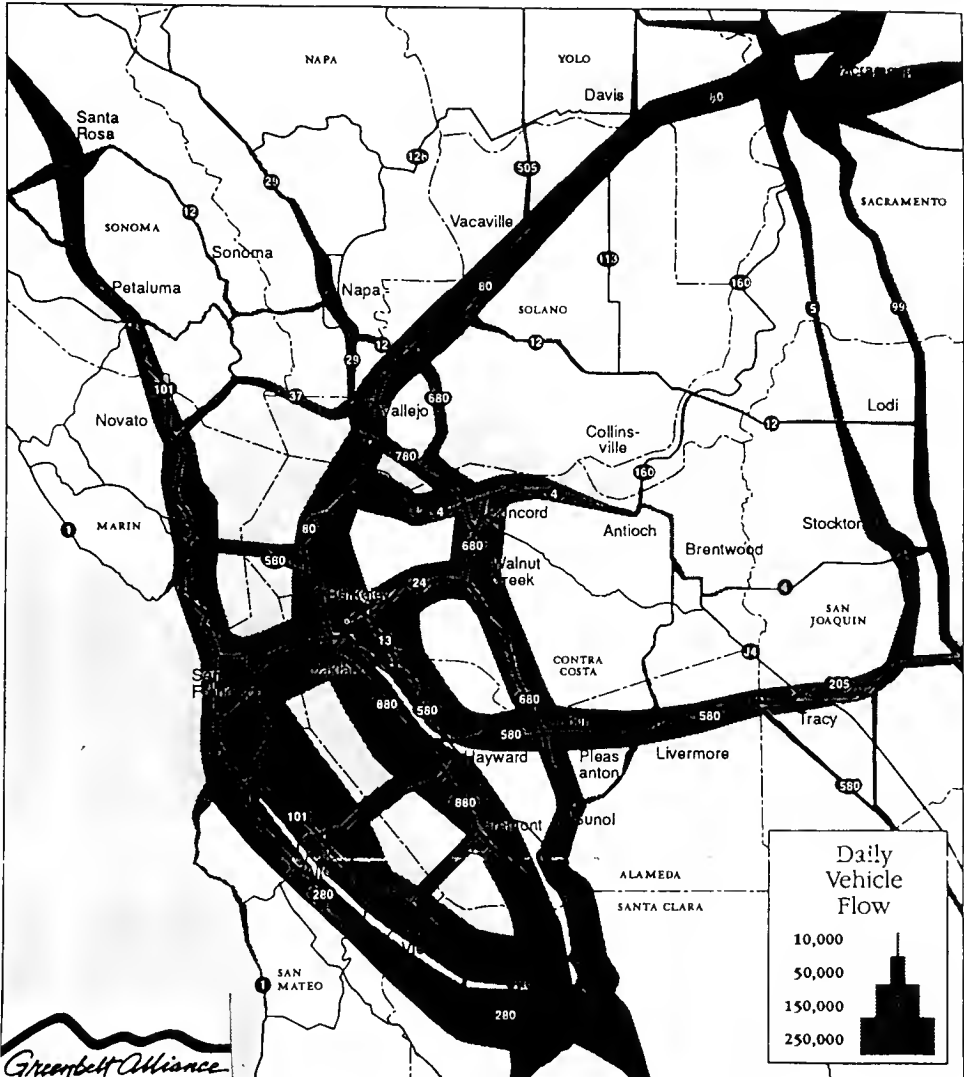
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION TO SACRAMENTO
SHOWING ROUTE OF THE PROPOSED MID-STATE TOLL ROAD

of Supervisors, c/o Clerk of the Board, 1221 Oak St., Oakland, CA 94612 and Livermore City Council, 1052 S. Livermore Ave., Livermore, CA 94550.

Urge Contra Costa County to evaluate its plan for the Toll Road. If it does, it is less likely to be able to stomach all the environmental and economic costs and reject the Toll Road for Contra Costa. Write to Lowell Tunison, Major Projects Div., Contra Costa Department of Public Works, 255 Glacier Dr., Martinez, CA 94553-4897. Ask to comment on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for

the East County Corridors; the East County Corridor/Delta Expressway will be built—if it is built—as the Mid-State Toll Road, and therefore the EIR should:

- 1) evaluate the impact of the Mid-State Toll Road as the Project in the EIR, and
- 2) ask that an alternative be evaluated that directs new housing to existing urban areas rather than the corridor along the Mid-State Toll Road.



BAY AREA TRAFFIC VOLUMES

(MAPS BY LOUIS JAFFE, GREENBELT ALLIANCE VOLUNTEER)

SAVE THE SHOREBIRDS!

The mudflats along the Albany Shoreline, between Golden Gate Fields and Central Avenue, provide some of the most critical shorebird habitat in the Central Bay. These mudflats are tremendously rich in the invertebrate life that makes up a shorebirds' diet.

Shorebird census data show that the Albany mudflats host 8,000 to 12,000 shorebirds at any one count time. Who knows how many during an entire day!

Shorebirds are amazing creatures. Breeding in the Arctic during the summer months, they then migrate 10,000 to 25,000 miles to their winter feeding grounds. Some fly as far south as Tierra del Fuego. Most weigh only a few ounces, 4 to 6 ounces is common, and to fly these long distances they expend a large proportion of their body weight in order to provide the energy for these travels.

Thus, every so often they have to stop for refueling. Their feeding requirements are very restrictive, however, and only a few sites along the Pacific Coast provide appropriate habitat.

San Francisco Bay is one of those few sites. Over a million shorebirds a year come to our Bay to find food in order to restore their energy reserves so that they can continue their journey. They come having lost up to sixty percent of their body weight due to energy expenditure. *They feed up to eighteen hours a day—nonstop!*

But they can't feed if they are flying. And they fly if people get too close. You've no doubt seen this yourself as you approach a flock of shorebirds. When you get close, they fly away.

This flight-causing disturbance is depriving these birds of necessary feeding time. And every minute of non-feeding time results in some birds not surviving their migratory journey. A

migratory bird's food consumption must match it's energy consumption. If it doesn't, the bird will die along it's migratory flightpath.

This is true for ducks also. Ducks have a somewhat similar migratory life cycle to shorebirds and the Albany mudflats provide critical feeding habitat for ducks during higher tides. Ducks, too, will flush when people come too close. And ducks too will die from inadequate energy reserves when they resume their migratory journey.

So when we heard that a bike and pedestrian trail was to be placed within three feet of the high tide line along the Albany mudflats we said "NO!". Tens of thousands of shorebirds' and ducks' lives will be put at risk by this trail.

The proposed trail is part of the Bay Trail. But the Bay Trail Plan specifically states that sensitive wildlife habitat should be avoided by the Trail. We have suggested alternate routes for this part of the Bay Trail that will avoid impacting the Albany mudflats.

The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) is the agency in charge of this proposed trail and their staff is presently very much in favor of the trail going by the mudflats.

Let the BCDC commissioners know that this trail is a mistake and that an alternate route should be selected. Please write as soon as possible to:

Robert Tufts, Chairman
S.F. BCDC

30 Van Ness Ave., Suite 2011
San Francisco, CA 94102-6080

If you need more information please call our Office at 510-843-2222. Thanks for your help.

—ARTHUR FEINSTEIN

BACK YARD BIRDER

I love a mystery! Identifying a bird new to you is just like solving any mystery. You must be accurate and patient and, above all, flexible (no two birds are identical, after all). Don't forget to note behavior as well as field marks.

One cold fall day our birding group was admiring a gorgeous male Eurasian Wigeon at Hayward Shoreline. As we strolled alongside the bay we spotted a small murrelet just before it dove in a forward arc-like plunge. It seemed ages till it surfaced (we later timed it at nearly a minute). After a few quick paddles he was under again, popping up quite a distance away. After some careful eyeballing, a considerable amount of arguing and a comparison of several different field guides we agreed that it was most likely an Ancient Murrelet, probably immature. The tell-tale signs were its black face and crown, gray back and dark chin, its white throat and underparts. The best clue was its creamy bill, unlike the dark bills of other murrelets. Ancient Murrelets are usually found in offshore waters so we reported our find to the ranger. He suggested we call a local birder who really knows pelagic (sea) and shore birds. Later that day he verified our identification. We felt great about being correct. One book said that after periods of high westerly winds these birds can be sighted inland in the autumn. AHA!

Ancient Murrelets breed in nesting colonies on islands in Alaska. They are nocturnal then and nest in burrows or in natural cavities. When the chicks are only 2-3 days old their parents assemble at the water's edge and encourage the young with a chorus of chirps. Eager to join their parents, the young swarm down hillsides and swim away with the adults, not returning to land till the chicks can fend for themselves. These cunning-looking birds dive for small marine invertebrates, literally flying underwater for long distances. When flying above water

they fly swiftly and directly, close to the surface, for short distances.

You recently may have been made aware of the Marbled Murrelet, a close relative. Little was known of their breeding sites and habits until a young pair of biologists in the state of Washington devoted themselves to solving that mystery. Marbled Murrelets forage at sea and had been observed by the locals flying very high inland at dusk. Where did they go and why? The only clues were pieces of nests and eggs found in tall conifers. In fact, in 1974 a tree trimmer in Santa Cruz County accidentally shook a chick from its nest 140' high in a Douglas fir. Armed with these facts, the young sleuths finally discovered a nesting colony 20 miles inland in the highest old-growth trees in an ancient forest. One more argument for judicious logging practices!

Murrelets belong to the alcid or auk family, 22 species of seabirds which live in northern parts of the world. North America hosts 20 species including auklets, the Dovekie, guillemots, murrelets, puffins and the Razorbill. Although they are closely related to gulls, terns and shorebirds, they are the ecological counterparts to the penguins of Antarctica. They have the same dense waterproof plumage and they dive and swim for food. But unlike penguins, who are flightless, alcids can fly in the air as well as swim in the water. The largest member of this family was the now-extinct Great Auk. It was a 30" long flightless bird who was hunted by sailors and Eskimos for food and later was slaughtered by commercial hunters for feathers for pillows and mattresses. The last pair was taken from an island off Iceland in 1844. Like the extinct flightless Dodo bird, the Great Auk was helpless on land.

Oftentimes, in haste, I've dismissed a perched bird "as just one more Scrub Jay." They seem to be able to change

shape and size more than any other bird!
I think I'd better be more careful so that
I don't miss a potential mystery bird!
—MEG PAULETICH

BOARD APPROVES PLAN Environmentally Screened Investments

A major change in investment of the funds of GGAS was approved by the Directors at the January Board meeting, culminating a search by the Finance Committee for a way to balance our fiscal needs with our environmental concerns. Rosenblum Silverman Sutton, a money management firm with offices in San Francisco and New York, has been retained as our investment advisor. Progressive Asset Management, brokers and advisors in Oakland, will handle brokerage and custody of the funds and offer information on the environmental and social records of companies in which the GGAS account might invest.

The Board of Directors has the responsibility of investing the funds given to us by generous friends over the years. Much of the investable funds consists of endowments, gifts made with the restriction that only the income will be used and the principal will stay intact. The income from the largest endowment is used for operating expenses, supplementing the small share of dues we receive from National Audubon. Other investments are restricted to particular purposes, such as our Sanctuary Fund and Paul Covell Education Fund.

As high-interest certificates of deposit matured and we found that only low-interest ones were available for reinvestment, the Board charged the Finance Committee to make a recommendation for a different investment approach. The Board requested that the Finance Committee also determine if there was an economic way to take the environmental consequences of investments into

account. The Committee (West Bay Director Jan Andersen, former Treasurer Nicole Selph and President Steve Margolin) investigated many possibilities and met with brokers, financial advisors and friends of Audubon before recommending Rosenblum Silverman Sutton and Progressive Asset Management to the Board.

The Finance Committee now will work with Rosenblum Silverman Sutton to structure a portfolio of stocks, bonds and cash that meets the needs of GGAS for income, safety and growth. The account will be screened to avoid investments in industries or companies determined to be incompatible with our Society's primary goals of protecting and enhancing birdlife, other wildlife and wildlife habitat. To the extent practical and compatible with our investment goals, investments may be made to support companies working to protect the environment. Progressive Asset Management will assist Rosenblum Silverman Sutton in implementing those screens.

—STEVEN MARGOLIN
President

WE'D LIKE TO SEE YOU AT SAN FRANCISCO MEETINGS

At our San Francisco General Meetings, low attendance has been a source of concern to your Board of Directors. While the last meeting, where the subject was the Sutter Buttes, drew a satisfying crowd of more than 50 people, usually attendance is disappointing. Catherine Rambo's fascinating slide presentation on the Clapper Rail was seen by only 20 people. Other equally interesting programs have drawn similarly low numbers.

So we are asking for suggestions to increase attendance. A few questions are: Is it the day of the week? What day would be better? Is the present location a reason you do not attend? Do you have

a suggestion for an alternate San Francisco location? We need a place that is not expensive, has good public transit and adequate parking. What program topics interest you? Would you like to see more or less programs about environmental issues, general nature subjects, exclusively birds, local or international focus? As always we are open to suggested topics and speakers.

Let us know what you think. If you haven't come to a meeting, give it a try: interesting subject-matter, congenial people, late-breaking environmental news, and refreshments—coffee, tea, and cookies. We look forward to seeing you in March when our subject will be Marine Mammals.

—JOELLE BUFFA

ANOTHER DAN MURPHY CLASS MIGRATION BY THE BAY

Spring migration brings the return of many of our nesting birds from their southern wintering grounds. Along with them are many species on their way to more northerly haunts. The three class sessions and two field trips will be designed to help you identify many of these migrants.

Lectures will be held at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park on Mondays from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., March 22, 29 and April 5. Field trips to Redwood Regional Park in Oakland and to Foster City will be on Saturday mornings, March 27 and April 3. Registration is \$65 for Academy and Audubon members and \$75 for non-members. The special Audubon member price is for this class only. To register enclose a note indicating the name of the class, your name, address, zip and phone number. Include your check and a self-addressed stamped envelope. Mail them to Adult Education, California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118.

SIERRA RAPTOR SYMPOSIUM

Falcons, eagles, hawks and owls will be the subject of an all day symposium on raptors of the Sierra to be held on Sunday, March 28 in Sonora. Sponsored by the Central Sierra Audubon Society, with support from Fibreboard Corp. and Sonora Mining Corp., with ten noted authorities participating.

Focus will be on field identification, habitat preservation, captive and artificial breeding programs and present status of raptors on Stanislaus National Forest and Fibreboard Corp. lands.

Registration begins at 7:30 a.m., with the program from 8:30 to 4:30. Admission is adult \$15, students \$8, Audubon members \$12, with a \$2 discount on registrations received before March 20. Bring bag lunch or drinks and sandwiches available from a vendor. For information or pre-registrations call Dale Keyser (209) 532-4852.

EXPLORATORIUM EVENING:

INTER-SPECIES MUSIC MAKING

Artist Paul Panhuysen, director of Het Apollohuis, a European Center for the artistic avant-garde located in Holland, will be at the Exploratorium in San Francisco, Saturday, March 13 at 8 p.m. His presentation will begin a six week installation *Singing the World Into Existence* (March 14–April 30, 1993). The public is invited to interact with his installation.

The performance on the 13th, called *Canary Grand Band*, involves jointly "composing" with the birds, as he explores sound making, sound muting, silence, improvisation, feedback and animal behavior. Tickets are \$8, or \$6 for members, of Exploratorium, students and seniors. Call (415) 561-0361 for reservations.

LETTER

San Francisco

A propos of birds at bath, I stumbled into an orgy of bathing warblers and nuthatches yesterday. While birding in Golden Gate Park, I noticed a frenzy of activity in the area of the flume that feeds water into Lloyd's Lake. The water there rushes along with great force as it tumbles down hill, splashing against the rocks with which the flume is built. Behind the flume there are many trees and a thick growth of underbrush and vines. Drawn by the sight of the large number of birds flying down and landing by the flume, I stopped and put my binoculars on them. The birds were both drinking and bathing and they numbered in the dozens. Immediately in front of me was an irregularity in the flume's wall, and it created a tiny backwater. Bathing in the backwater was a Red-breasted Nuthatch. It was followed by two Pygmy Nuthatches. While one was still bathing, two Yellow-rumped Warblers were lined by waiting to use the same little pool. It was the damndest thing I had ever seen.

I walked a few feet along the flume and then climbed up to where I could observe its entire length until it dropped into Lloyd's Lake. The whole edge of the flume was busy with birds coming and going to their baths. Mostly—anywhere from 15 to 20 at a time—there were Yellow-rumped Warblers, but there was a generous scattering of Pygmy Nuthatches. I saw one Townsend's Warbler at the scene, but do not know if it bathed or not.

All this happened shortly after 2:30 p.m. Dec. 5. Does this seem unusual, or do you think it could be a daily occurrence? I know such a thing could be checked out, but it isn't possible to get over there every afternoon.

—CECIL W. BLANK

NEWS FROM OUR RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch (415) 868-9244

Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Wildlife Sanctuaries & Centers for Nature Education under joint sponsorship of Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin and Sequoia Audubon Societies

Gary Holloway, President

GOLDEN GATE REPRESENTATIVES ON THE AUDUBON CANYON RANCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steven Margolin, *ex officio*

Nicki Spillane

Dan Murphy

Bruce Walker

RANCH OPENS MARCH 13

ACR's public season begins Saturday, March 13. With all the rain we've had this should be a very special season. As I write this at the end of January, the first Great Blue Herons have already investigated the heronry at ACR. It's pretty clear the birds are ready for spring so this may be just the year to make your first Ranch visit in March. You'll hear the creek as it rushes through Pitcher Canyon, a rich wildflower season will spell the end of winter, herons and egrets will be establishing nests, the trails will be fresh with scents of oak, bay, fir, and redwood. It's been about seven years since we've had a normal winter, so do come out early and enjoy the benefits of spring. As always, there is no entrance fee for Audubon Canyon Ranch. Of course we gladly accept contributions at the registration table. If you haven't been to ACR before, just drive west to Hwy. 1 in Marin County. The ranch is located about 3 miles north of Stinson Beach and about 12 miles south of Olema.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

We really do need your help too at the Ranch. We need hosts each and every weekend and holiday between March 13 and our closing on July 18. Hosting is fun and easy. All you have to do is greet visitors, direct them to the overlook, or answer a few questions. You will probably get enough time off to hike a trail and enjoy a bit of the Ranch yourself. One thing you'll get for sure is the satisfaction of helping others discover the Ranch. Volunteers should expect to

arrive at the Ranch at around 9:45 and stay until 4:30. You can sign-up through your Audubon chapter, or you can call ACR at (415) 868-9244.

CHAPTER HOSTING SCHEDULE

All hosting dates are weekends and holidays between the Ranch's opening on March 13 and its closing date on July 18.

Golden Gate Society: all May weekends except Memorial Day, May 31.

SPELLING B-BE-BEE-BEA?

So now you know the truth. I goofed on the spelling of excel. It's really XCEL. You can just imagine all the other words I can't spell.

—DAN MURPHY

ALCATRAZ BIRD COUNTERS WANTED

The Golden Gate National Recreation Area is looking for volunteers to count and document birds and their location on Alcatraz Island. The commitment is a minimum of one day (five hours) every two weeks, and the position requires an official National Park Service uniform (supplied). The season is from September to January. Orientation and training sessions are required. Volunteers will be given the opportunity to learn both the natural and cultural history of the Island. There will be an orientation meeting on April 15 at 7 pm. at Upper Fort Mason, Bldg. 201. For information, call (415) 556-0563. The program coordinator is Brett Woods, (415) 556-1070.

GIFTS and BEQUESTS

FOR GGAS

Gift of

Nancy Hillyard

Janet Rosen

In Memory of

The Hon. Howard W. Alcorn
of Suffield, CT

Mrs. Alvie Santos

Alfred (Alla) Schmitz

"my second wing"

Dorothy A. Shattuck

George Homen

Bill Van Meter

FOR THE PAPAGENO PROJECT

Edith S. Coliver

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY ROSTER

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT
 (510) 528-0288 Update: (510) 524-5592



THE GULL

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